

a deputation from this society, conjointly with a deputation from the Metropolitan Improvement Society, waited by appointment upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer, for the purpose of obtaining some concession in the window duties, and more particularly in the ventilation of cellars and basements stories, especially in the houses of the poorer inhabitants. At that interview he (the chairman) took the opportunity of stating that the very stringent way in which the window duties are levied by the several assessors, under the direction of the Board of Stamps and Taxes, almost entirely hinders that ventilation, which ought in a great number of instances to be permitted, and that window-light might not be assessed, unless placed in dwelling apartments; but if purely for ventilation, that they ought not to be charged to the window-duties. It must be some satisfaction to the society to hear that, although they might not be permitted to the full desirable extent, yet that light and air are always permitted free of tax to privies; and water-closets, being only an improved description of these conveniences, he supposed were also exempt; but further than this, the chairman of the Stamps and Taxes (who assisted the Chancellor of the Exchequer at this conference) stated that a frame with perforated zinc panning would be permitted free of duty, although fixed in an external wall. This the society, he was sure, would appreciate as of great moment; and it gave him much pleasure, inasmuch as the endeavours and suggestion of the deputation had not been without a beneficial result. That the society and the public in general might know exactly the footing on which they stand regarding these ventilating apertures, he had, as directed, addressed a letter to the chairman of Stamps and Taxes upon the subject, the answer to which he hoped to be able to lay before the society at its next meeting.

Having laid before the meeting the result of this communication with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, upon the subject of ventilation, and having stated to the society some of the improvements which have been made in the amended Bill as to the regulation of buildings, it now became his duty to state, and he did it with much regret after so much discussion had been entertained upon the subject, that there were still many important objections to the present Bill, and many improvements that might and ought to be effected in it prior to becoming law. One improvement, and he had most seriously considered the subject in all its bearings, would be the repeal of the 4th & 5th of Wm. 4. cap. 35; and the 3rd & 4th of Vict. cap. 45, commonly called the Chimney Sweepers' Bill. Persons connected with the building business are aware of the very inefficient method as now adopted of sweeping any flue, but most especially those flues built with angles; and also the great damage that is occurring to the walls of flues at their salient angles, by the machinery now in operation. The society would see by the drawing which he held in his hand, and which drawing he submitted to Lord Shaftesbury, that these flues must, at their salient angles, be in a very short period of time worn away one into another, and the damage that will be done will be irreparable, and the liability to damage by fire be greatly increased. It is true that in new buildings this wearing away may be in a manner prevented by iron-work fixed at the salient angles of flues; yet in old houses, or houses built previous to the passing of these Acts, great damage must inevitably be progressing, and no flue, whether of new or old construction, is it possible to cleanse completely by a small round brush at the end of a sick, and which, after a little use, becomes diminished to less than a fourth of its original size. The amended Bill still retains the clause preventing the over-selling of chimney-breasts, which is an useless prohibition, and ought to be expunged.

The amended Bill still retains a most objectionable clause or section connected with the appointment of a registrar, whose salary is to be £1,000 per annum; but it is provided that in case of absence, the duties are to be performed by deputy, who is to be paid by part of the salary of the registrar, or otherwise to an assessor named, as the Lords of the Treasury shall appoint; this is so objectionable,

that although his lordship's attention was particularly called to this subject, and precedents were adduced to shew that where a large salary is appropriated, and the duties of office are permitted, nay, even sanctioned, by Act of Parliament, to be done by deputy, that principal office will no doubt become an absolute sinecure.

The attention of the society is also directed to the alterations in the fees proposed to be paid in the various matters under this Bill, and it is with much regret that, great as the fees are under the present Act, under this amended Bill, a variety of fees not included in the fees at present chargeable are now introduced. In the proposed Bill an exemption is made in any trifling addition to a principal building, if such addition be carried up at the same time, or within twenty-one days after the principal building is covered in. By a most ingenious leaving out of a few words, these additions will all have to be paid for by additional fees; and although to an unprofessional observer it will appear that but one fee, according to the rate of the house, yet, in fact, several fees will be payable in new buildings. And in alterations and additions, as are the fees of all officers, even in the elaborate tables set forth, but there appears a special table for special fees, and which no person can comprehend until enlightened therein by the official referees. As regards the fees payable under the present Act, they amount now to nearly 10,000, per annum; under the new Bill, with its extended limits, fees to the amount of nearly 20,000 will be payable by the public for, although a Building Bill is supposed only to interest the builder, yet it is the public generally which have to bear all its contributions, and to share in its enactments. Much has been done by this society in watching, in considering, in petitioning, in advising, and in shaping into its present form the twelve or fourteen Acts of Parliament which have been introduced to the Legislature since 1841, and he still hopes this amended Bill may, by the exertions of its committee, be still further amended, so that, without looking to the interests of those who may be looking forward to the various appointments under the intended Bill, they will still work as they have heretofore done to obtain a Bill really beneficial to the public.

In conclusion, although he had trespassed so much upon their attention, he could not but congratulate the society upon the great benefit they had done to all persons dwelling within the limits of its operations, and to the exertions of the society might be traced the alterations and improvements in the Bill. Compare the Bill brought in by Lord Normanby in 1841 with the amended Bill, and read the evidence, and the various petitions reported by the society, and he will find that although they stood almost alone in opposition to the objectionable Bills on their first appearance, yet they bave, by exertions, now assisted by members of both houses of Parliament, been enabled to obtain thus far an improvement upon all its predecessors; and the committee cannot but regret that from the multiplicity of business in which the noble lord at the head of the Woods and Forests must be engaged, he must have forgotten the important aids by him at the last interview; that, previous to the Bill further progressing, the deputation was to have a further interview with his lordship and the Crown surveyors, as his lordship was obliged to leave the meeting before it could come to a conclusion upon the merits of the matter. If another meeting had been obtained, no doubt some of the objections in the amended Bill might have been rectified, altered, or expunged; but, as it is, it is to be hoped it is not even now too late to obtain such alteration in the Bill as an experienced and disinterested person may think an improvement. The chairman sat down amidst loud cheering.

Mr. W. Cubitt moved the thanks of the society to the chairman and committee for the great trouble they have had in the various Bills before the public, and he hoped that until a good and sufficient Bill be before the public, they would still continue their valuable services. He then moved that the amended Bill be referred back to the committee to re-examine, and to report thereon.

Mr. Higgs, in seconding the motion, stated that his only objection was, that it entailed so large a portion of trouble, and must engage so

large a portion of the valuable time of their excellent chairman; for although in all appearances the various reports were the works of the committee, yet in fact they were the sole labours of the chairman; and he could congratulate the society on the good fortune of having such a president at such a time. Still trespassing upon their worthy chairman's time and attention, they could not do better than again refer it to the committee, feeling assured that although it must, after four years' strict superintendence, be exceedingly irksome, and no doubt, from the many public as well as private calls upon the chairman's vigilance and care, yet he felt convinced the matter would still have his advice until finally completed. It was then carried unanimously that the amended Bill be so referred again to the committee.

After the thanks of the meeting were passed to the chairman, the meeting adjourned until the last Wednesday in June, unless specially summoned previously by the chairman.

OXFORD ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.

May 29.—The Rev. the Rector of Exeter College is the chair.

The following new members were admitted:—Rev. R. P. Smith, Pembroke College; E. J. Howard, Esq., Lincoln College; R. Goss, Esq., Exeter College; Rev. Follitt Boscawen, All Souls; Alexander Joseph, Esq., Brasenose; J. G. Joyce, Esq., Magdalen Hall.

Page's Glossary of Ecclesiastical Ornament and Costume, &c., was added to the library.

Short notices of several churches in the immediate neighbourhood of Oxford, prepared for the third part of the "Guide," by different members, were read, illustrated by sketches.

Marston.—Mr. Rooke, Oriol.—The pillars and arches are of the time of Richard I.; the outer walls and windows of Henry VIII. The windows are square-headed, with rather singular returns to the dripstones, including in a square form the letters I H C and I H S, and other ornaments. The tower is also late.

Woodham.—Mr. Rooke, Oriol.—This church is built in the thirteenth century, with towers added in the fifteenth, in an unusual manner, being built within the original walls of the church, standing partly on the west wall and partly on arches, instead of being added on the outside. It is very picturesque and situated.

Nike.—Mr. Rooke, Oriol.—A small plain church, of the thirteenth century, with some alterations of a later period, which are far from being improvements.

Cuddesdon.—Mr. Rooke and Mr. Freeman.—A cruciform church, of the end of the twelfth century, with a tower at the intersection. The windings of the west doorway are very remarkable, being a mixture of the Norman zig-zag to the early English tooth ornament. The pillars and arches of the nave, walls of the aisles, and the south door, are of the thirteenth century. The chancel has been rebuilt in the fifteenth, and has arches in the side walls, as if for the addition of aisles, but these do not extend more than half through the thickness of the wall, so that they must have been built for ornament.

Stanton.—John's.—Mr. Freeman.—A very interesting church, of the time of Edward I., and a valuable specimen of early decorated work. A paper on this church has previously been given to the society, with drawings, by Mr. Stimpson, of Oriol.

Elford.—Mr. Freeman, Trinkey.—A small church, of the thirteenth century, the west end of which, with its two lancet windows, separated by a tall buttress, supporting a hill-turret, with small buttresses at the angles, is a particularly good design. There is a fine side window, in the usual situation (block up), in the inside of which is an original stone seat.

Cosley.—Mr. Milford, Magdalen.—The chancel and walls of the nave of the end of the twelfth or beginning of the thirteenth century; the east end has a triple lancet; the side windows of the chancel are square-headed, but the mouldings shew them to be of the same age as the east end. There is a low side window. The tower is very small and low, scarcely appearing above the roof of the nave; it was added in the sixteenth century.

St. Bartholomew's Chapel.—Mr. Milford.—